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The third meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts in the fiscal year of 1917 was held in their office, 1729 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, D.C., on January 12, 1917.

The following members were present:

Charles Moore, the Chairman;

Frederick Law Olmsted;

Thomas Hastings;

Herbert Adams;

J. Alden Weir;

Charles A. Platt;

Wm. Mitchell Kendall;

also Colonel Wm. W. Harts, U.S.A., their Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Commission was called to order at 9:15 A.M. and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: The minutes of the preceding meeting, held October 6, 1916, and of the committee meeting held at the Century Club, New York City, on Friday, November 24, 1916, were presented by the Secretary and approved.

2. FARRAGUT MEMORIAL WINDOW: The Commission from time to time during

the past two years had been assisting a committee of Naval officers, known as the Farragut Memorial Window Committee, in their efforts to secure a suitable design for a stained glass memorial window to Admiral Farragut, to be placed in the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. Mr. Blashfield, during his incumbency, had been handling the matter for the Commission from the first, as a committee with power. The final sketches for this design, which had been executed by Mr. Wilson of the Gorham Company, New York City, were now referred to the Commission by the Superintendent of the U. S. Naval Academy with the request that they "view them and decide whether or not they measure up to the required artistic standard.". Commander C. T. Jewell, on behalf of the Memorial Window Committee, was present and briefly reviewed the steps taken to date in consultation with Mr. Blashfield. Mr. Blashfield's last report dated April 15, 1914, was also read for the information of the members. The Commission were not pleased with features of the design presented, one of the seeming defects being in the relative scale of the different parts. In view of the fact that Mr. Blashfield had followed the matter up to the present stage and had seen the present design, (according to Commander Jewell) and because the Commission were not sufficiently acquainted with the circumstances

which led to the preparation of the present cartoon, they felt it would be best for both Mr. Weir and Mr. Blashfield, with Commander Jewell, to reinspect this design at the studio of the Gorham people in New York City, after the different parts of the design had been properly assembled; and Mr. Weir was authorized to give the approval of the Commission to the cartoon if, after this inspection with Mr. Blashfield, he felt that this approval can be given.

3. MEADE MEMORIAL. Governor Brumbaugh, of the State of Pennsylvania, Chairman of the Meade Memorial Commission of that State, appeared before the Commission at 10:30 by appointment. He was accompanied by Mr. Pennypacker, another member of the State Memorial Commission. The Governor first reviewed the personnel of the State Commission, stating that the members of that Commission had been specifically named in the Act creating it and that they are therefore not appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth, except in so far as opportunities occur in the filling of vacancies. One vacancy had occurred in the death of Mr. Baer, President of the Reading Railroad, but otherwise the original Commission appointed by the Legislature is still in existence. Discussing their present sculptor, Mr. Grafly, Governor Brumbaugh stated that he was selected because he

appealed to them because of his standing as a sculptor in the United States and because he was a Pennsylvanian. He mentioned that, in the beginning, there was danger of having an appointment of an architect made which had been in a way prior-arranged and would have been in no way a credit to his Commission, and that they had to make their decision regarding an architect very quickly. They then decided upon Messrs. Simon and Bassett because they felt that they were absolutely honest and capable in their profession, and because they had no political affiliations. Since, however, the various designs prepared by these men had not proved acceptable to the Commission of Fine Arts, they had concluded at their last meeting that the difficulty lay in the fact that the Commission felt these architects were not able to prepare a suitable design. As these men, however, were selected in absolute good faith by those who wanted to do the best thing for Pennsylvania, and they were rising in their professions, he wanted their professional integrity protected; in other words, he did not want them publicly to be thrown aside as unsatisfactory. Mr. Moore called to the Governor's attention that the question of the training and education of these architects had been discussed at one of the meetings of the Commission of Fine Arts, and when Mr. Simon had been interrogated

regarding this, he replied that neither he nor his partner were graduates of any architectural college; and what has been accomplished by them has been by dint of hard work and study under a private tutor; that they had designed the Manufacturers' Club in Philadelphia, the Garden Pier at Atlantic City, and Mr. Works' residence in Philadelphia, but the Meade Memorial was their first experience as far as a monumental work of this kind was concerned. The Governor expressed his surprise because he had understood otherwise, but again repeated that they would like to retain the present architects and would like to get the advice of the Commission just as to what else should be done under these circumstances. A solution that had occurred to him was the employment of a competent consulting architect to assist their present artists in the solution of their problem; and he stated that his Commission would take the best one they could find irrespective of where he was from, and also pay him proper compensation. He requested the Commission to give him the name of such an architect. They hesitated to make such a suggestion, but said that in their opinion, a consulting architect is the best solution of the matter under existing circumstances. After some further informal discussion, the Governor left.

4. NOBLE MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN. Colonel Harts explained to the Commission that the American Society of Civil Engineers had employed Mr. Paul Bartlett and Mr. Glenn Brown to prepare a design for a fountain in memory of Alfred Noble at a cost of $45,000, which is to be located in Rawlins Park immediately south of the new Interior Department Office Building. He stated that the artists had completed their preliminary study of the design, and that the sketch-model was now placed before the Commission of Fine Arts by the American Society of Civil Engineers for approval. He informed the Commission that payment to the artists for their work to date was contingent on the approval of the design by the Commission of Fine Arts, and that as soon as the design was approved, the American Society of Civil Engineers could proceed to the collection of funds for the Memorial. The design was approved.

5. DESIGN FOR NEW FISH MARKET. The Commissioners of the District of Columbia had from time to time submitted designs prepared by the Municipal Architect for the new Municipal Fish Market, to be located on the water-front, between 10th and 12th Streets, SW. The building is to cost not more than $185,000. The Commission in their last official report had requested that detailed drawings of the final design be shown them before the building is placed under contract, and the present sub-

missions included the front and rear elevation and several floor plans for the proposed structure purporting to have been studied with the criticisms of the Commission in view. The chief suggestion of the Commission was that the rear elevation should be given further study so that this, the water-side of the structure which will face East Potomac Park, may appear as effective as the front elevation will from the street. Engineer Commissioner Kutz and the Municipal Architect appeared later on in connection with another matter and the Commission were given the opportunity to go over the above designs with them personally. (See Exhibit A.)

6. PARK LODGE FOR MONTROSE PARK. Colonel Harts submitted the design for the proposed new Park Lodge in Montrose Park (P. D. & G. No. 340-35). The design was approved. The proposed location of the structure to line up with the cemetery building was also approved.

7. BATHHOUSE ON TIDAL BASIN. A design submitted by Colonel Harts for a proposed new bathhouse to be erected on the Washington shore of the Tidal Basin (P. D. & G. No. 332-183) was approved with the suggestion that a long ventilating dormer shown in the roof be eliminated. This advice has been followed.

8. DESIGN FOR NEW "WASHINGTON" HOTEL. Mr. Hastings, on behalf of Carrere & Hastings, architects for the new Washington Hotel to be constructed in this city at the north-east corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street, NW., / submitted the plans and designs of that structure to the Commission of Fine Arts for criticism. They were approved. /

9. FIELD HOUSE FOR POTOMAC PARK. Colonel Harts laid before the Commission three studies marked "D", "E", and "F" for the proposed new Field House in East Potomac Park. One of the schemes (marked "D") appealed to the Commission the most, but it was advised that the angular wings shown be eliminated and that the plan be revised in order to relate the semi-detached wings of the Field House to the future boat houses to the east of it. In connection with this it was thought advisable that the entire grouping of buildings be studied at the same time, and that progress plans be submitted from time to time to the architect members of the Commission for criticism. The suggestion of an alternate scheme for an outside boulevard skirting the water's edge, instead of as shown on the original plan for the development of the whole park, did not meet with approval. See 333.23 D.C.

10. MERIDIAN HILL. Colonel Harts desired the opinion of the Commission regarding a number of details of the large wall being constructed at Meridian Hill. Mr. Platt was appointed a committee with power and later in the day inspected the work on the ground. He approved the models of the entablature, capitol and base, and the texture of the balustrade for all molded work of the new entrance and for the interior shell; and of five models submitted for rusticated blocks the one next in coarseness was approved. A lost cap was slightly modified in design.

11. DISCUSSION REGARDING SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE FOR THE DISTRICT. The Commission then took lunch in the office, having as their guests, General Black, the Chief of Engineers of the United States Army, District Engineer Commissioner Kutz, Municipal Architect Ashford, and Messrs. Glenn Brown, Leon Dessez and J. Rush Marshall, architects of this city. Immediately after luncheon an extended discussion was held on the question of suitable type of school architecture for the District of Columbia. The Commission had, since its creation in 1910, been urging that the District authorities adopt the Colonial style as more in

harmony with the traditions established by the early architects of the Capital City. For several years past, however, the District has been erecting school buildings designed in the Elizabethan style and had not been consulting the Commission with regard to the plans. Just recently the new Central High School had been constructed in the style against which the Commission had been advising; and in view of the proposed erection of the new Eastern High School, the Commission wrote a strong letter of protest on November 8th last to the District Commissioners in which they stated that they viewed with dismay 'the erection throughout the District of Columbia of schools designed after an unusual, inharmonious and incongruous style of architecture and presenting bad examples of that style.'. In reply to that protest the Engineer Commissioner had written:

> " Personally I like this type of architecture (referring to the Colonial), and I wish that a way might be devised whereby it could be applied to schoolhouses without sacrificing the interests of the students. One of the principles, however, which guides school architects is that the window area in the school-room shall not be less than twenty per cent of the floor area, and preferably twenty-five per cent. This, I am told, is not in any sense a local requirement, but is in general use throughout the country. Mr. Wm. B. Ittner told me, in conversation, that he had several times made serious efforts to use this type of architecture for high-schools, but had been unable to meet the above requirement without so changing the Colonial style as to make the results incongruous. Recently, in conversation with a prominent New York City school architect, I discussed the same problem and he told me he had made several unsuccessful attempts to solve it.

With every desire to meet the wishes of the Fine Arts Commission, the Commissioners of the District feel that they are confronted by a condition, and not a theory, and that it is incumbent upon the Fine Arts Commission to supplement its vigorous protests against the type of architecture used in buildings recently constructed, by the submission of some pencil plans or sketches in support of its view that this problem is capable of satisfactory solution, or by referring to existing buildings in the United States in which, in their judgment, the problem has been satisfactorily solved.

The Municipal Architect and the Principal of the Eastern High School are now on a tour of inspection for the purpose of obtaining information which will be useful in the designing of the new Eastern High School, and may make a second trip later on.

The first work on the plans of the new school will be started in the near future and it is highly desirable that any facts bearing on this matter, which the Fine Arts Commission may wish to lay before the Board, be presented at the earliest practicable date."

The present conference was thereupon arranged, and the members of the Commission collected a large number of photographs and other illustrations showing existing schoolhouses in the Colonial style in which the problem had been satisfactorily solved. Mr. Ashford called attention to the fact that they had been using the Colonial style for many years, and referred in particular to the Chevy Chase School, constructed in 1896, the Western High School, erected in 1898, and the Armstrong Manual Training School, but that the criticisms of the school people with respect to that style were that it furnished insufficient light. He also stated that they were not only confronted with these difficulties of lighting, but also that the fact had to be recognized that they were working under very

limited appropriations for school houses. He argued that when you come to the Colonial style, heavier cornices and mouldings increased the cost considerably.

Among the exhibits collected by the Commission were some examples of school-houses constructed by Kilham & Hopkins of Boston, Massachusetts, regarding which the designers stated that the lighting requirements of 20% of the floor area had been observed; and in the case of the Salstonstall School at Salem, Massachusetts, J. E. McLaughlin, the architect, stated that the ratio of window-openings to floor areas is 25% in the school-rooms. The Commission insisted to Mr. Ashford that the requirements of window lighting could be fully met by proper study, and that while it was a difficult problem, it was one that had been successfully solved. Mr. Olmsted read a letter from Mr. R. Clipston Sturgis of Boston, Massachusetts, from Mr. H. Langford Warren of the School of Architecture of Harvard University, and from Mr. Robert S. Peabody of Boston, in support of the Commission's arguments. A number of other details in connection with this matter were discussed in order to get a full interchange of views, but the chief contention of the Commission that it is as practicable and as economical to use the Colonial style as it is any other style, was insisted on by them throughout the

meeting. Mr. Ashford said he had been under the impression that the Commission wanted to adhere strictly to the old Colonial style and was glad to learn that this was not the case. To show that this had long since been called to his attention, Mr. Moore read from the first letter of the Commission of Fine Arts on the subject of school architecture, in which the following statement was made:

> " We called attention, however, to the importance of harmony of style in the schoolhouses of the District. That point was made because we assumed that the building question, which was not in harmony with the architectural traditions and association which have become established in Washington, was the result of individual preference in an isolated case and might be followed by others equally individual in character. But from what was said to us informally by the Municipal Architect and from the present attempt to follow the Elizabethan style in the colored normal school there appears to be a deliberate effort to secure a certain consonance among the school buildings by adopting that style for use in all of them. We are unanimously of the opinion that the Elizabethan style, which was the expression of an age and life quite foreign to our times, and which is peculiarly associated with a different country and a different climate, is ill adapted and inappropriate for public buildings of the present day in Washington. We believe that we should follow the traditions established by the early architecture in this capital, which adhered to classical traditions while exhibiting great freedom in adaptation to varying practical requirements, ranging from simple brick structures (such as the Octagon) to the White House itself. The architecture of today should be evolved from the architecture of those times, adhering to the same classical traditions, with equal freedom of expression in the practical solution of every problem. With these principles in view we recommend that the present design for the colored normal be abandoned and the problem be re-studied on the lines suggested above, with a view to maintaining the Washington tradition in all future school buildings. "

The conference then adjourned. In leaving Mr. Ashford was furnished as many of the exhibits gathered by the members of the Commission as had not to

be returned to those from whom they were borrowed, and was given references to other illustrations of suitably designed structures in books and magazines that had been collected but had to be returned to the Library of Congress. (See Exhibit B).

12. NEW HOSPITAL GROUP FOR SOLDIERS' HOME GROUNDS. General Black, the Chief of Engineers, U.S.A., laid before the Commission elevations and a ground-plan prepared by Leon Dessez, an architect of this city, for a new Hospital group to be located in the Soldiers' Home grounds. This group eventually will comprise eight buildings, of which it is proposed to construct the Utility building and the Administration building at once, and possibly, if sufficient funds were available. one of the ward buildings shown. General Black explained the proposed location of these structures as shown on the ground-plan with relation to existing buildings, stating that it was considered better to disregard the axis of the old group for the purpose of getting better light and air for the buildings of the new group. After some discussion, the Commission approved the sketches in general and appointed Mr. Olmsted a committee with

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Mr. Dessez to make an inspection of the ground with reference to the axis-line of the new groups. After this inspection Mr. Olmsted and Mr. Dessez discussed the matter with General Black, Mr. Olmsted's suggestions being communicated orally.

13. KEY BRIDGE PLANS. The Commission had during the past year been consulted a number of times with respect to plans for the proposed new Key Bridge across the Potomac at Georgetown, and the final design showing a double-deck treatment had met with their approval. Since this approval was given, however, the Engineer Officer in charge had found that the high cost of labor and materials and in particular the cost of preparing proper approaches to the bridge under that double-deck treatment, would require an ultimate expenditure of about $1,900,000, while the limit of cost for the structure was placed by Congress at $1,000,000. In view of that, another design, a single-deck structure, had been prepared, which the engineers felt could be constructed within the limit of cost. These two designs, marked "A" and "B" were placed before the Commission by Colonel Flagler, the Engineer Officer in charge of the project, accompanied by Mr. Wyeth, the architect, and Mr. Tallman, the assistant Engineer to Colonel

Flagler. Design "A" was the one double-decked approved by the Commission on December 2, 1916, while Design "B" was the simplification of the structure to bring it within the total limit of cost. The Commission recognized that, while design "A" would be the one which under normal conditions would be produced, labor differences and rise in cost of materials forced something different, and decided that design "B" was not bad enough to be rejected by the Commission. The following endorsement was thereupon placed upon the second design submitted:

> " The plans originally approved for a double-deck bridge fulfill all the conditions; the bridge as designed would be adequate for traffic, and acceptable from an artistic standpoint as a feature in the landscape. Owing to the increased cost of labor and material the Commission is informed that it is impossible to build the bridge as first designed. The new design submitted (revised January 12, 1917) proposes a bridge that will not cost more than the amount appropriated. The Commission believes that, in order to make this bridge satisfactory to the eye, the arches should be segmental or appear so. If to make such a change will increase the cost beyond the amount specified in the appropriation, then the present design, while not satisfactory from an artistic standpoint, meets the conditions required by the appropriation, and may be accepted at a sacrifice of good looks to conditions imposed. In normal times the bridge as shown in the latest design could probably be built for approximately half the amount appropriated. "

It was explained by Colonel Flagler that it was the intention to lay both designs before the proper committees of Congress for their decision as to which should be executed.

14. MONUMENTS IN ARLINGTON CEMETERY. In a letter from the Quartermaster-General, dated October 23, 1916, a number of photographs of monuments of different designs already erected in Arlington Cemetery, and which were thought by the Quartermaster's Corps to be in good taste and appropriate, were submitted with the request that they be passed upon by the Fine Arts Commission and the Quartermaster-General advised what, if any, objection exists with them. The Commission inspected them and found none of them to have such artistic merit to warrant them to be taken as models. There were eighteen numbered photographs submitted and it was pointed out, that of these, the ones numbered 5, 14, and 15 alone held promise. The Commission called attention to a number of designs members had brought along to the meeting which could be developed by an experienced architect into something very fine for the purposes of the Quartermaster-General, and these were transmitted to him with their report. (See Exhibit C.).

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it adjourned at 5 p.m., subject to call of the Chairman.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Approved:
Chairman.

January 12, 1917.

Dear Sir:

At the meeting of the Commission of this city held on January 11th last, general consideration was given to the design for the front and rear elevation, and several floor plans, of the proposed new municipal fire warhel, presented with your letter of January 10th. The members also had the opportunity, during a conference with you and the municipal architect later in the day, to discuss other designs with you and to suggest any ideas or suggestions they desired to have considered for another.

The general feeling of the Commission was that the design for the rear elevation needed to be given further study so that this, the outer side of the structure where civil fire laws govern, may appear as effective as the front elevation with iron fire steel.

Very truly, yours,

(Signed) Wm. H. Carter.

Colonel, U. S. Army.

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Capt. Col. E. H. Hunt.
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.,
Engineer Commissioner, D. C.

February 2, 1917.

Dear Sir:

As a result of the discussion during the conference held on January 12th last, the Commission have formulated their opinion as to school architecture in Washington as follows, and requested me to lay the same before you:

1. The problem of the school room as presented to the architect should be solved by him. The requirements as to the amount and direction of light may seem unreasonable; nevertheless, they are the established requirements and until school authorities change them they are to be met by the architect.

2. To meet these problems does not involve the adherence to a particular style of architecture. Especially for Washington it does not involve the selection of a style like the Elizabethan, which if carried out consistently belongs to another age, and is not adapted to modern school requirements. The modern so-called Elizabethan architecture in use for schools is no more than a label attached to the outside of the buildings. It is extraneous ornament unworthy to be considered seriously as architecture.

3. The style founded on classic traditions may be followed and will meet the requirements as to light. Where, and in so far as, the classic feeling is expressed, school buildings will be in general harmony with the best traditions of Washington. On the contrary, the expression of Elizabethan feeling is in direct violation of such traditions.

Very truly, yours,

(Signed) Wm. W. Harts.

Colonel, U. S. A.,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Lieut. Col. C. W. Kutz,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.,
Engineer Commissioner, D. C.

"B"

February 5, 1917.

Dear Sir:

As a result of the discussion during the conference held on January 15th last, the Commission have formulated their opinion as to school architecture in Washington as follows, and requested me to lay the same before you:

1. The problem of the school room as presented to the architect should be solved by him. The requirements as to the amount and direction of light may seem unreasonable; nevertheless, they are the established requirements and until school authorities change them they are to be met by the architect.

2. To meet these problems does not involve the adherence to a particular style of architecture. Especially for Washington it does not involve the selection of a style like the Elizabethan, which if carried out consistently belongs to another age, and is not adapted to modern school requirements. The modern so-called Elizabethan architecture in use for schools is no more than a label attached to the outside of the buildings. It is extraneous ornament unworthy to be considered seriously as architecture.

3. The style founded on classic traditions may be followed and will meet the requirements as to light. Where, and in so far as, the classic feeling is expressed, school buildings will be in general harmony with the best traditions of Washington. On the contrary, the expression of Elizabethan feeling is in direct violation of such traditions.

Very truly, Yours,

(Signed) Wm. W. Harts.

Colonel, U. S. A.,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Lieut. Col. C. W. Kutz,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.,
Engineer Commissioner, D. C.

February 6, 1917.

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Sir:

Your letter of October 23d last with reference to various matters in connection with Arlington Cemetery was laid before the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting held January 12th last, the first meeting since its receipt, and noted.

With respect to your inquiry under paragraph 4, the Commission looked over the designs on the photographs you refer to, but felt that none of them has such artistic merit as to warrant its being taken as a model. Of these, however, the designs shown under photographs numbered 5, 14, and 15 hold the most promise, and in the hands of a skillful designer could be turned into something quite acceptable. They have also gathered a number of designs which they feel can, in the hands of a skillful designer, readily be adapted and developed into good models to meet the requirements of the Department, and some of these are transmitted herewith.

They learn with regret that their recommendation for the employment of a really first-class man, as outlined under Section 11 of the 2d Indorsement of May 1, 1916, cannot be met at present because of lack of available funds; they feel that this recommendation carries the solution of the problem of getting good designs, and hope that it can eventually be carried into effect.

The Commission appreciate the cooperative interest of the Quartermaster-General in this entire matter, and are anxious to be of every possible assistance. The general cemetery work throughout the country is, in their opinion, simply deplorable, and the examples of good work under supervision of the United States at Arlington will in time, it is their belief, be a great help in improving that condition.

By direction of the Commission:

Respectfully,

(Signed) WM. W. HARTS

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

The Quartermaster-General,
United States Army,
War Department.